In 2005, Alabama felt the effects of the fuel disruption brought about by Hurricanes Ike and Gustav. Although the situation was not extreme, it exposed opportunities in energy assurance planning. As Alabama's energy portfolio becomes more diverse and Smart Grid applications develop, planning and resiliency efforts must be expanded to incorporate these changes. In-house State and local government expertise will need to be addressed, plans and policies need to be updated, and a method for tracking the duration, response, restoration, and recovery of disruption events must be in place.

In order to properly assess Alabama's needs, communication between stakeholders is essential. Therefore, the Energy Division of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) will coordinate its efforts with the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA), Alabama Department of Homeland Security (ADHS), and representatives from the petroleum and utility industries of Alabama to determine what factors necessitate the changes needed to Alabama's Energy Assurance Plan (EAP). The effort will focus on communication and coordination, energy supply systems, cyber security, energy data analysis, and critical infrastructure interdependencies.

The Energy Division will also enter into an agreement with a third party entity to develop and amend Alabama's EAP. The third party will possess prior experience in the development and implementation of energy assurance planning, and will provide the State additional expertise in addressing new technology such as Smart Grid and renewable energy. In addition, they will assess and analyze Alabama's energy supply systems, and address any additional infrastructure interdependencies. The Energy Division will ensure that all state policies and procedures will reflect the changes set forth by the revised EAP.

To assist in further assessing Alabama's petroleum production and reserve capabilities, the Energy Division will attempt to solicit data from petroleum stakeholders on petroleum operating capacities and reserves located in their jurisdiction which should include capacity, fuel type, location, back-up power generation capability, and retrieval method. This data will be collected and entered into Alabama Department of Homeland Security's *Virtual Alabama* program which is licensed by Google Earth to assist emergency management coordinators locate fuel reserves in the state during an emergency incident. *Virtual Alabama* allows for information to be available to many users at any remote location and would play an integral part in locating fuel for first responders during a fuel disruption emergency.

The fuel waiver process also needs to be addressed in Alabama. During previous disasters, several parties have attempted to begin the process of requesting a fuel waiver in Alabama to no avail. The Environmental Protection Agency follows a standard procedure for issuing waivers

and works with a primary point of contact in the state. The Energy Division will request that the primary point of contact for Alabama, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, consider requests from energy stakeholders to issue waivers and to establish a method of notification as to the status of fuel waivers being requested by the state.

In order to properly assess the resolution of an energy disruption, a mechanism must in place to track the duration, response, restoration, and recovery time of disruption events. Currently, Alabama uses the Emergency Management Information Tracking System (EMITS). This system logs all phases of an incident including when the incident occurred, when and how it was responded to, and when it was resolved and by what means. The EMITS will provide the necessary information for assessing response and recovery times to determine any changes that may be necessary to Alabama's EAP.

Expertise is essential in resolving issues during a catastrophic event. The Energy Division will partner with the AEMA to incorporate new training modules into 1 – 2 tabletop exercises conducted throughout the year to assist in implementing revisions to Alabama's Energy Assurance Plan. These exercises will train all State and local personnel on energy infrastructure and proper execution of the Alabama EAP. Additionally, a breakout session will be included in the Gulf State Hurricane Conference that will be held in Mobile, AL in 2010. The conference is an ongoing hurricane preparedness event that alternate hosting responsibilities between Alabama and Mississippi Emergency Management Agencies and includes many aspects of preparedness including energy assurance and fuel supply disruption.